

ONE

STORY

SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

WEEK 33

The New Covenant

BEFORE THE SESSION:

- Pray for each of your group members by name
- Look over the questions on the right and choose the ones that are most appropriate for your small group. If you're really feeling motivated, you might even think of a few on your own.
- Think through how you might prompt your group a little if they have difficulty getting started in discussion.
- Take a look at the accountability question below. Lead members to gather one on one or in same sex clusters to discuss it over coffee this week.

THIS WEEK'S BIG IDEA

We can be with God forever through Christ's sacrifice under the new covenant.

ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTION

Are you living your life as someone free from guilt and shame under God's grace in the new covenant?

TO PREPARE FOR NEXT WEEK:

Read 2 Kings 24-25; 2 Chronicles 36; Habakkuk; Jeremiah 41-52; Lamentations 1-2;

AS YOU READ...

...Think about what God's plan is for your life.

CONNECT

(10 min.)

Choose one or both of the following questions to begin your time together as a group.

1. **What's the best news you heard last week? What made it so special?**
2. **Have you ever made a promise to someone that you didn't keep?**

EXPLORE

(40 min.)

Say something like, "Today we will be talking about the new covenant and what this means in our lives." Then guide your group through these questions.

3. **If you were in worship this week, what statement or experience stood out to you? What stood out during last week's reading?**

(Leader: Take some time to discuss any questions that may have arisen as your members read through this week's assigned reading.)

4. **Read Hebrews 10:1-4. God made a covenant with the Israelites through the law. What does it mean that the "law has but a shadow of the good things to come" (v.1)? What was "wrong" or imperfect about this old or first covenant? What was God's purpose for repeating the same sacrifices?**
5. **Read Jeremiah 31:31-34. What differences do you see between the old and new covenants? Are there times when you feel that you are living under the old covenant?**
6. **What does it mean to you to truly know the Lord as Jeremiah intended (v34)? What is God's part? What is yours?**
7. **Jeremiah's new covenant promises many things like: the ready forgiveness of sins, freedom from the sins of the previous generation, the internal working of the Holy Spirit, and that we will know God. Which aspect means the most to you right now in your spiritual walk? Why?**

TRANSFORM

(10 min.)

Wrap up your time by recalling a few things from your meeting that stood out to you. Then, ask the following question and pray together.

9. **How would you explain the difference between the old and new covenants to someone who wasn't a Christ follower? How does it make you feel that God wants us to know him?**

This Week's Study Notes:

The Old Covenant

The Old Covenant is the covenant God made with Israel when they accepted and promised to obey the words written in the Ten Commandments (see Exodus 34:28). Their obedience to the commands of the law was to be rewarded by God's constant care of Israel.

Scripture Notes

Hebrews 10:2

The continuous repetition of the sacrifices indicated that the root problem of sin was never addressed, until Christ.

Hebrews 10:4

No amount of animal sacrifices could change the moral imperfection within people. The main purpose of the Old Covenant was to point out the need for One who is finally able to "take away sins" of believers forever.

Jeremiah 31:31

God said He would make a new covenant with Israel and Judah (Gentiles are included by faith in this covenant). This promise is very significant, for it shows that God's revelation through Moses was not the end, but the beginning. The New Covenant was inaugurated by Jesus' death.

Jeremiah 31:33

Far from being done away with, God's law is being internalized in those who have the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Jeremiah 31:34

We have obviously not yet reached this part of the New Covenant. The New Covenant promises have begun but are not yet complete.

Leader Tips

AS YOU READ THIS WEEK...

- Think about and pray for each member of your small group.
- Think through the following questions:
 1. Whom does God bring to mind as I read these verses? Why?
 2. What needs to change in my own life as a result of what I'm reading?
 3. Whom do I need to tell about these verses?

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY WE RECOMMEND...

- Bible Commentary: Bible.org
- Bible Commentary: DesiringGod.org
- Pronouncing Biblical Words: Netministries.org/Bbasics/bwords.htm

* Scripture Notes adapted from and used by permission of Serendipity House Publishing, 1 LifeWay Plaza, Nashville, Tennessee

